

# NEW HORIZON

ARUBA ESSO NEWS  
LAGO OIL & TRANSPORT CO., LTD.  
ARUBA, NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

*Stan Kuiperi '85*



There's a time for everything under the sun. A time to speak and a time to listen ... A time to laugh and a time to be serious... Today, for all of us, it is time to depart. Some only from a job, some also from their homes and country with its culture and customs ... It is not easy ... Not for the employees and their families, nor for the community in general. For 60 years, the name "Lago" has had a magic ring to it. It meant prosperity, security, future and stability.

Besides economic ties, Lago has also had emotional ties with the community, for every family on the island has in some way or the other been affected by its presence. That tie has now been broken ... That lifetime partnership has ended. An end that, as with any other life seems to have arrived too soon. These circumstances have brought about drastic changes: the employees will have to look for a new security and the island will have to strengthen and/or search for other economic partners for Aruba's progress.

Those circumstances, however,

should be viewed as just the catalysts of change. Changes in the direction of our lives will come from the decisions we make and the responsibilities we assume. Every situation, at least from some perspective, can be turned to our advantage, and every advantage can be developed to the fullest. It is a time for new challenges, new opportunities, new developments. Whatever our future endeavors may be, we can be confident that we do have the necessary background to make them successful. Most of us can look back and be proud of an accomplished career. Our past experiences, training and achievements, combined with a positive attitude, are all tangible values that we can carry along with us into the future. There is indeed a great expansion out there ...

There is a new horizon that is yours to discover .....

*The Editor*

## EDITORIAL

### Descubri un horizonte nobo

Tin un tempo pa tur cos den e mundo aki. Un tempo pa papia y un tempo pa scucha ... Un tempo pa hari y un tempo pa ta serio ... Awe, pa nos tur, ta tempo pa bai. Algun solamente ta bai laga un trabao, algun tambe ta bai laga nan casnan y nan pais cu su cultura y custumbernan ... No ta fácil ... Ni pa e empleadonan y nan familia, ni pa e comunidad en general. Pa 60 años largo, e nomber "Lago" tabata tin un sonido mágico cune. E tabata significá prosperidad, seguridad, futuro y estabilidad. Fuera di lazonan económico, Lago tabata tin tambe lazonan emocional cu e comunidad, ya cu cada familia ariba e isla a wordo di un manera of otro afectá pa su presencia. E lazo ey awor a wordo kibrá ... E consorcio di henter un bida a terminá. Un fin cu, manera ta cu cualquier otro bida, ta parece di a yega mucho liher. E circunstancianan aki a causa cambianan drástico: e empleadonan lo mester busca un seguridad nobo y e isla lo mester fortalece y/of busca otro socionan económico pa Aruba su progreso. E circunstancianan ey, sin embargo, mester wordo mirá como solamente e catalizadornan di cambio. Cambio den direccion di nos bidanan lo bini for di e decisionnan cu nos haci y e responsabilidnan cu nos asumí. Cada situacion, alomenos di algun perspectiva, por wordo birá na nos ventaha, y cada ventaha por wordo desaroyá te na un máximo. Ta un tempo pa retonan nobo, oportunidadnan nobo, y desaroyonan nobo. Lo que sea nos esfuertonan pa futuro, nos por ta sigur cu nos tin e formacion necesario pa haci nan exitoso. Mayoria di nos por mira atras y ser orguyoso di un carera cumplí. Nos experiencianan, entrenamiento y logronan di pasado combiná cu un actitud positivo, tur ta balornan palpable cu nos ta carga hunto cu nos den futuro. En verdad tin un gran expansion eyfor nan ... Tin un horizonte nobo cu ta keda na bo pa descubri ...



**DALMATIUS  
NAVAS**  
41 years

Photo not  
available

**JAMES  
BLIJDEN**  
41 years

Photo not  
available

**JAMES  
ARRINDELL**  
40 years



**JACOBO  
MADURO**  
40 years



**LONGEST SERVICE  
EMPLOYEES IN 1985**





# NEW HORIZONS

## Employees embark on new careers

**Yanbu, Qatar, Australia, Canada ... Of the 900 people working until the end of March, at least a few will make transatlantic moves and wind up in one of those places in the world that sounds so far away. Others will stay near, in Aruba, the Caribbean or the South American region. Some of those who have already received a job offer spoke about their feelings and experiences.**



**David Mendes**, for seven years an equipment inspector at Lago, received an offer to work for a refinery in Yanbu, Saudi Arabia. "I never thought I would ever go to Saudi Arabia," said David. "But the Saudis as a people have always interested me since I was a boy."

How about the change in lifestyle? "The Saudi lifestyle is indeed very different, but most of the restrictions (alcohol, pornography, etc.) my family and I have already adopted. Besides, the refinery has a huge community where you can enjoy sports activities and other forms of recreation. I think a two-year contract in Yanbu would be a good experience in life, both culturally and professionally."

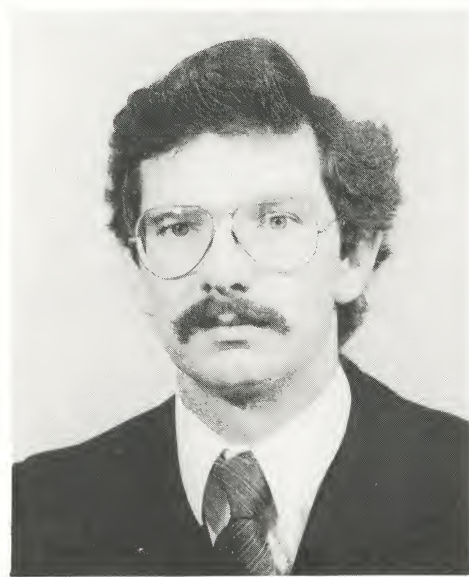


**Simon Arends** has worked as a chemical engineer for the past 4-1/2 years in Lago's Technical Department.

"I worked on my resume the same day Lago's shutdown was announced. I think you have to make a great effort to get a job," said Simon. In February, after making two trips to Venezuela, he received an offer from Lagoven to work as contact engineer at the Amuay Refinery. "I have made a decision to go to Venezuela. I know the place and the people well and I won't have to make major adjustments," he said. Besides, Simon sees great possibilities for the future at Lagoven. "The refinery there is one of the biggest and most modern in the world. It has more plants than Lago, plus a new flexicoker. I will learn more and have opportunities for advancement." Looking forward to it? "Yes, I do."

**Rudy Dorsman**, a TH graduate of Twente, Holland, moved from Holland to Aruba only two and a half years ago ... and is now moving back with his wife and child. "We're returning to where we were before, so adaptation will not be a problem at all. I was in Holland for eight years before I returned to Aruba," said Rudy.

Rudy will be employed by NIRA, a manufacturer of pagers in northeastern Holland, as an industrial engineer. He received five offers while he was in Holland for interviews, but it took some advance planning. "First of all," he said, "I mailed 55 job applications in November and mentioned in the cover letter that I would be in Holland in February of '85, thus inviting the companies to react." Seventeen of those companies responded positively, and after having made some further arrangements with them by telex, Rudy contacted them.



for details once he arrived in Holland.

"It was tough, though!," commented Rudy. "I would leave the house at 6:00 or 7:00 a.m and return at 7:00 p.m. And that went on for fifteen working days. I recommend going on interviews with the least attractive companies first, so that by the time you get to the most attractive companies, you'd have a lot of training."

After his job-hunting experience in Holland, Rudy has a bundle of tips he is eager to share: send lots of letters, take your last payslip with you, carry passportsize photos, don't be too choosy at the start and ... please be on time for interviews ... It certainly does not seem like Rudy would have any trouble finding another job ...







Upon termination from Lago, **Carlos de Cuba** will become an instructor of management courses and a faculty member of the Psychologisch Adviesbureau in Aruba and Curaçao. One of his responsibilities in this new position will be to visit commerce, industry and government offices to analyse their training needs and then determine how his organization can assist in that. "I feel that, initially," commented Carlos, "commerce will be careful with investments, but that eventually it will see the necessity to get involved in training, especially the type of training that increases productivity."

Carlos has confidence in Aruba's ability to again reach an economic stability in the future. "And because of my background at Lago," he said, "I have the conviction that I will be able to contribute a great deal to Aruba's development in my new job." Indeed he could! In his 33 years with Lago, Carlos has been involved in instructing, in various other aspects of training, in communications and public affairs. A wealth of experience to invest in Aruba's future. ●

*The ARUBA ESSO NEWS is published for all Lago employees and annuitants.*

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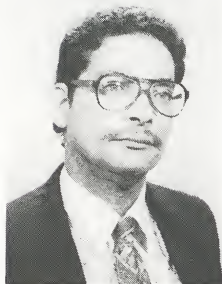
**Printer:**

**Verenigde Antilliaanse**

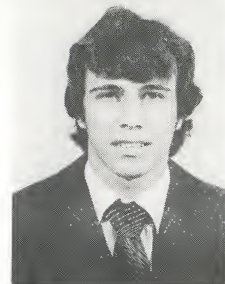
**Drukkerijen N.V.**



**Yanbu, Qatar, Australia, Canada ... Di e 900 hendenan trahando te na fin di Maart, alomenos algun lo haci viahenan transatlántico cu ta caba na un di e lugarnan na mundo cu ta zona asina lew. Otronan lo keda cerca, na Aruba, den Caribe of den e region Súr Americano. Algun di esnan cu ya a haña un oferta di trabao a papia tocante nan sentimento- y experiancianan.**



**David Mendes**, pa sheta aña un "equipment inspector" na Lago, a haya un oferta pa traha pa un refineria na Yanbu, Arabia Saudita. "Nunca mi a pensa cu algun bez lo mi yega te Arabia Saudita", David a bisa. "Pero e Sauditanan como un pueblo semper a capta mi interes desde cu mi tabata mucha." Kiko bo ta haya di e cambio den estilo di bida? "E estilo di bida Saudita ta en berdad hopi diferente, pero mayoria di e restriccionnan (alcohol, pornografía, etc.) mi familia y ami ya caba a adopta. Ademas, e refineria tin un campo enorme unda cu bo por disfruta di actividadnan deportivo y otro forman di recreacion. Mi ta kere cu un contrato pa dos aña na Yanbu lo ta un experiencia di bida, tanto culturalmente como profesionalmente."

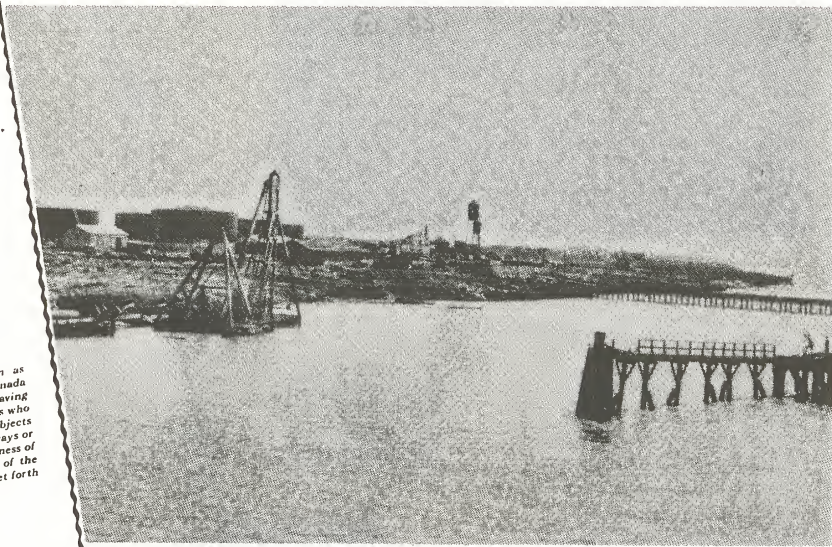
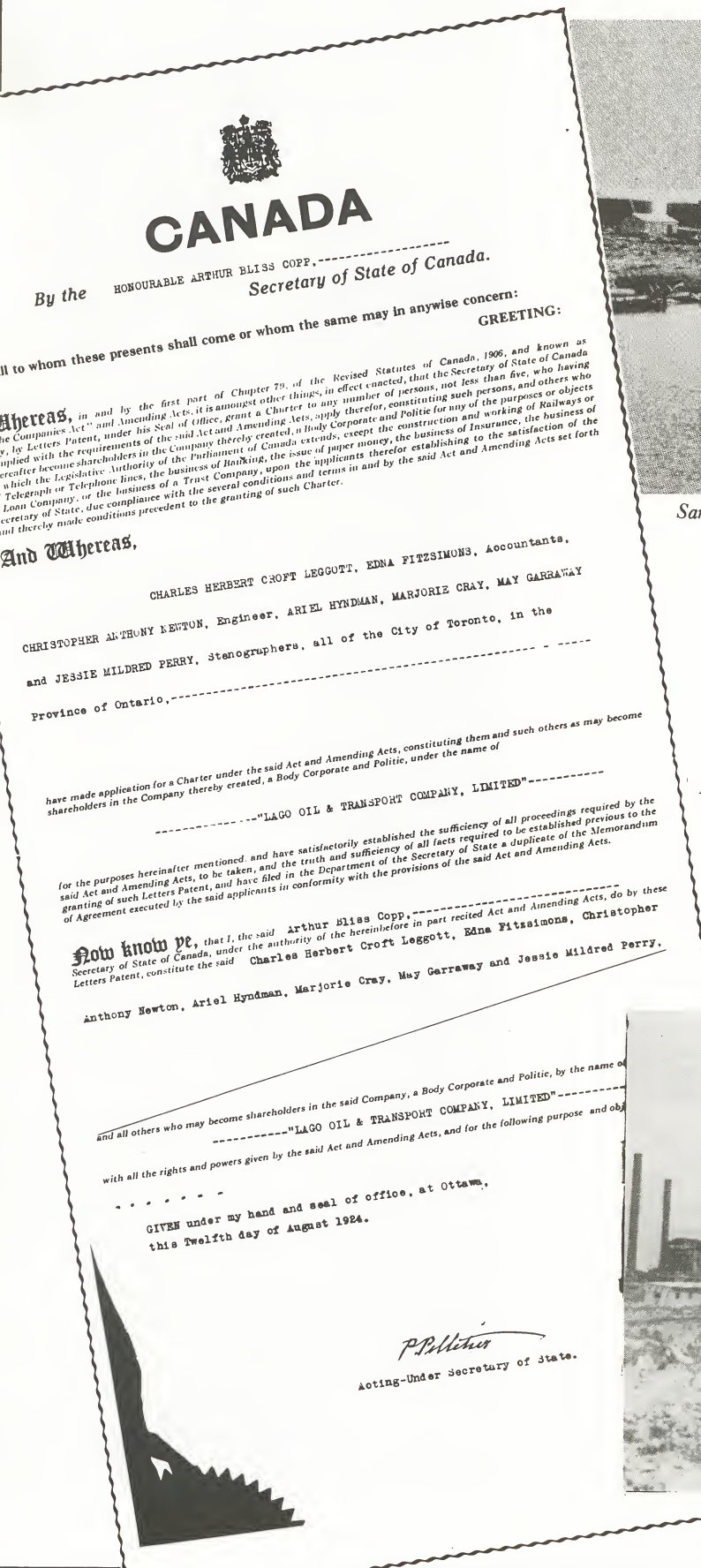


**Simon Arends** a traha e último cuatro añanan aki como un ingeniero químico den Lago su Departamento Técnico. "Mi a traha ariba mi resumen e mesun dia cu e paro di operacion di Lago a wordo anunciá. Mi ta kere cu bo mester haci un esfuerzo pa haya un trabao", Simon a bisa. Na Februari despues di a haci dos viahe pa Venezuela, ela haya un oferta di Lagoven pa traha como un "contact engineer" na e refinería Amuay. "Mi a tuma e decision pa bai Venezuela. Mi conoce e lugar y e hendenan bon y lo mi no tin cu haci ningun gran ahustamiento", ela bisa. Ademas di esey, Simon ta mira posibilidadnan grandi pa futuro na Lagoven. "E refinería ta un di esnan mas grandi y mas moderno na mundo. E tin mas planta cu Lago tabata tin, ademas di un flexicoker nobo. Lo mi siña mas y lo mi tin oportunidad pa promocion."

(cont. na pag. 9)



# Lago milestones (1924-1985)



San Nicolas Harbor in 1927.

In 1924, Lago Oil & Transport Company, Limited, was incorporated. The Company's goal was to establish a transshipping station for Venezuelan crude oil in Aruba.

In 1929, the first barrel of crude passed through the topping stills of the newly constructed Lago refinery. Lago could then handle 90,000 barrels of crude per day.

In 1932, Standard Oil Company of New Jersey purchased Lago Oil & Transport Co. Ltd.

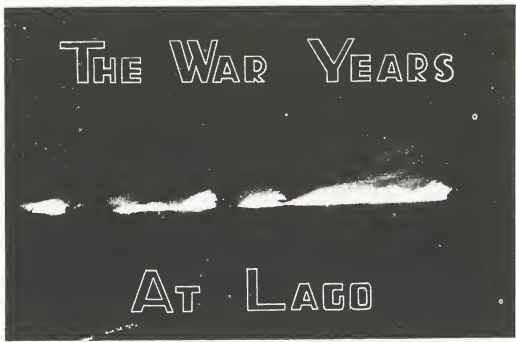
Lago's incorporation document.



The first barrel of crude passed through Lago topping stills in 1929.



# Lago millest



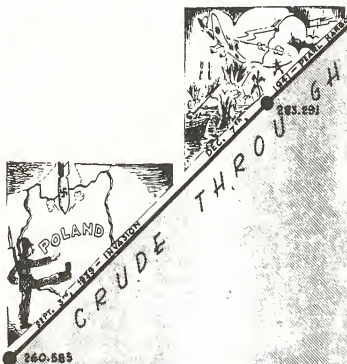
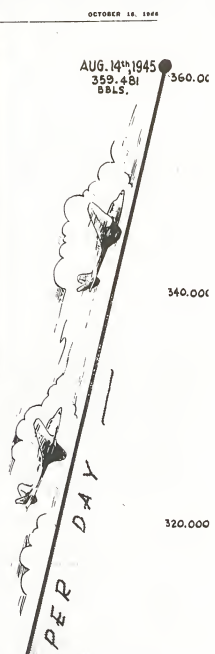
## 1939 - 1945 A SUMMING-UP

The accomplishments of Lago employees during the war are too well-known to need reviewing; military and government officials have been high in their praise, and many citations and other tokens of merit have been received. This, then, will be chiefly the story of life at Lago during those years, with the people who made the Company's tremendous war production records possible.

Some of it has been told before. Much of it, however, is now told for the first time. It is a historical record, a summing-up for future recollection, of Lago and Aruba in the war years.

Above: a freight and motor-vehicle night steaming, all from the Lago Tankers "Oranjestad" (center) at left, with its back barges and "Poderosa" (center) over a wide area of the sea south of the Curaçao Peninsula in 1942, after torpedo hits by German submarines. The war was no longer in Europe—it was here.

Aki: "Ehe un bala tragico e inevitable, sera kome aki e bala bampura, "Oranjestad" (na banda drecha, cu su tanker barya y "Poderosa" ta plama riba tanker pa zuid di Curaçao dia 18 di Februari, 1942, despues cu torpedonan di submarino Aleman a rala nan. Guerra na tanker na Europa ta — guerra tanker na tanker.



### ONE IN SIXTEEN

The Lago Refinery at Aruba produced one out of every sixteen barrels of aviation gasoline used by the United Nations during the war years. Some other outstanding records:

September 1, 1939 to August 31, 1945	
High octane gasoline	529,705,000 gallons
Motor gasoline	2,867,553,000 gallons
January 1, 1942 to August 31, 1945	
Submarine type diesel oils	804,521,000 gallons
Navy special fuel oil	2,949,613,000 gallons

Lago supplied petroleum products to Allies in WWII.

In 1936, Lago's first representative body for locally hired employees, the Employee Advisory Committee (EAC) was formed.

In 1937, as part of its commitment to provide support services to employees, Lago built the residential community of Lago Heights. Essoville followed in 1939 and Lagoville in 1947.

In 1939, soon after WW-II broke out in Europe, Lago started supplying aviation fuels and other petroleum products to the Allies. In fact, Lago refined 1 out of every 16 barrels of aircraft fuel used by the allied forces.

In 1943, Lago's most costly and single largest unit, the catalytic cracking unit or PCAR started operations.

In 1945, Lago refined the first billionth barrel. By January of 1985, the total barrels of crude refined had surpassed 6.5 billions of barrels.

In 1949, Lago's workforce reached an all-time peak of 8,300 employees.

In 1950, automation began to play an increasingly important role in Lago's operation due to greater competition in the Company's most important marketing areas.



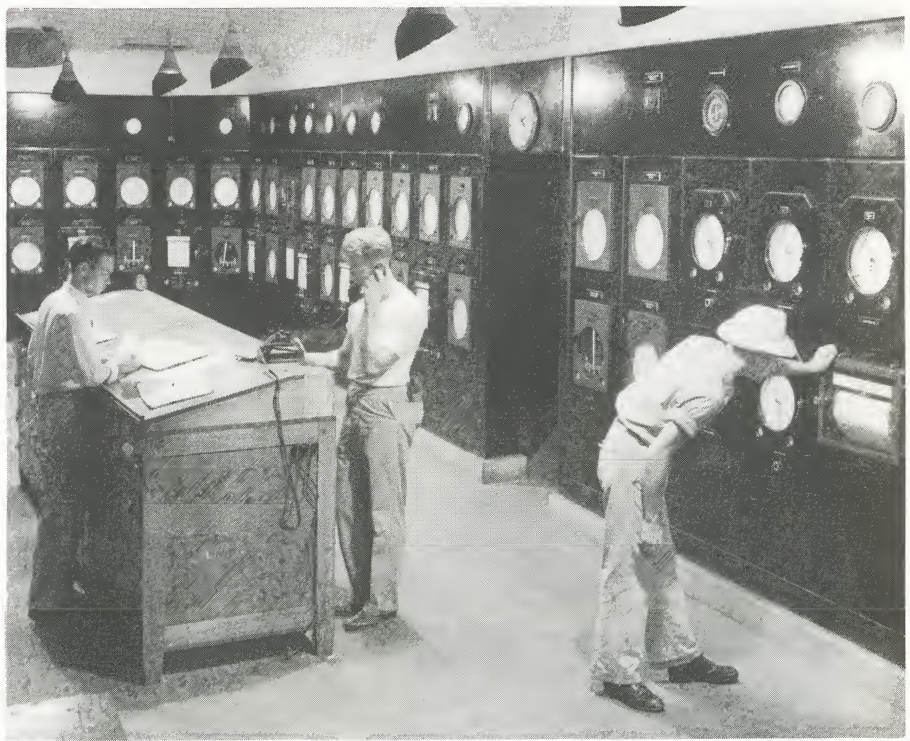
Lago's catalytic cracking unit.



# ies (1924-1985)



*Lago's workforce peaked at 8,300 in 1949.*



*Beginnings of automation.*

nderfer for her contribution to this issue.





Lago milestones  
(1924-1985)

# Aruba Esso News

VOL. 25, No. 1

PUBLISHED BY LAGO OIL & TRANSPORT CO., LTD.

January 18, 1964

In 1960, a bunkering station was inaugurated in Oranjestad to supply bunkers to tourist and other ships.

In 1963, Lago employees achieved their best safety record in the refinery's history, with a frequency index of less than three-tenths of one disabling injury for each 1,000,000 manhours worked. Since 1949, Lago had won 7 first-place awards in the U.S. National Safety Council's Annual Contests.

In 1964, a 40-hour, five-day workweek was introduced at Lago.

In 1971, the first phase of a new hydrodesulfurization complex was inaugurated in order to remove sulfur from heavy fuel oil. This was followed in 1974 by the second HDS complex, which brought total production capacity to 265,000 barrels of low sulfur fuel oil per day.

In 1984, Lago Oil & Transport Co., Ltd. announced its intention to shut down on March 31, 1985, after over 60 years of operations.

**Lago Employees Achieve Safest Year In History With 0.27 Rate of Siete NSC Promer Lugar Asegura; Total Herida na Trabao Tambe A Baha**

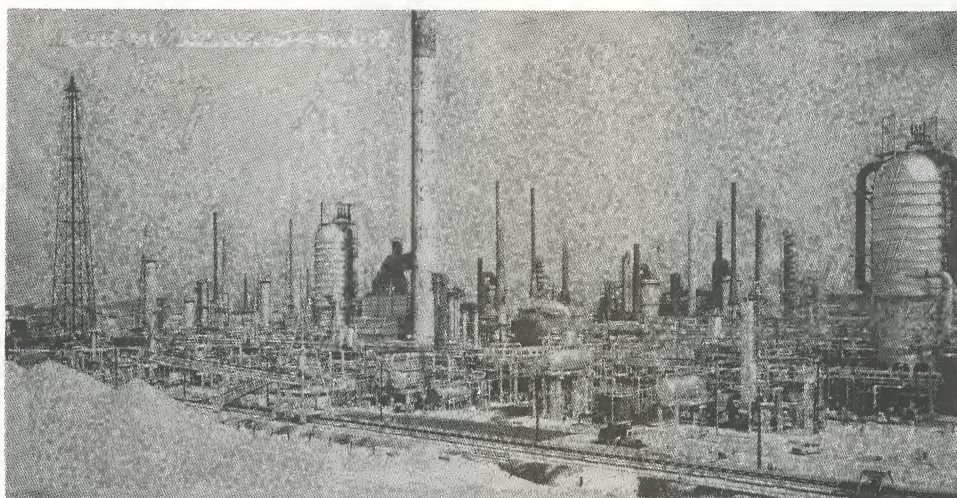
**Donovan Lo Lago Lago Feb. 1 pa Oficina di Standard Oil Company**

**Seventh NSC First Place Is Assured Total On-Job Injuries Also Decline**

Lago afirma su posicion como e refinaria di mayor seguridad den mundo ariba Dec. 31, ora 1963 a termina cu un cifra di frecuencia di 0.27 pa desgracia incapacitante kibrando tur record, mientras anotando solamente dos accidente durante mas di ocho million ora di trabao. E exito notable casi ta asegurado di siete promer lugar den competicion di National Safety Council.

Lago affirmed its position as the safest refinery in the world when it closed 1963 with a record breaking 0.27 frequency rate of disabling injuries, registering but two mishaps in over eight million manhours. The notable accomplishment all but assures the seventh place in National Safety Council competition.

Lago's best safety record: 1963.

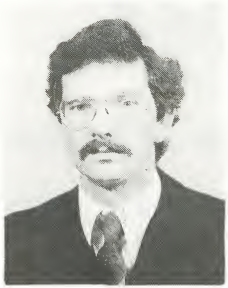


The hydrodesulfurization complex.



Lago refinery today.



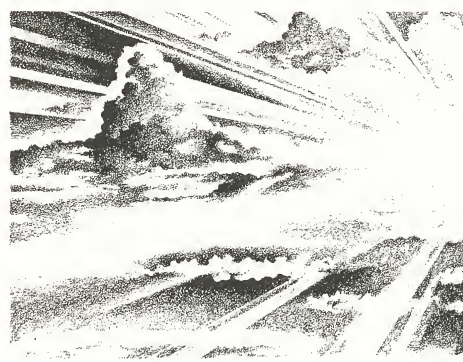


**Rudy Dorsman** un graduado di TH (Technische Hogeschool) na Twente, Hulanda, a muda di Hulanda pa Aruba solamente dos aña y mei pasá . y awor ta muda bek cu su casa y su familia. "Nos ta bai bek na unda nos abata antes, pesey adaptacion lo no ta ningun problema. Mi tabata na Hulanda pa ocho aña promé cu mi a egresa Aruba", Rudy a bisa. Rudy a wordo empleá na NIRA, un fabricante di "pager" na parti noord-ost di Hulanda, como un ingeniero industrial. Ela ricibi cinco oferta pa trabao mientras cu e tabata na Hulanda pa entrevistanan pa trabao, pero tur esaki a requerí algun planeamento adelantá. "Prome cu tur cos," ela bisa, "mi a manda 55 carta di aplicacion pa trabao via post na November y den e carta di introduccion mi a mencioná cu mi lo a na Hulanda na Februari di '85, invitando asina e companianan pa reaccioná." Dieshete di e companianan aki a contesta positivamente, y despues di a haci algun arreglo adicional cu nan via telex, Rudy a tuma contacto cu nan pa mas detaye una vez cu ela yega Hulanda. "E tabata duro, si," Rudy a comentá. "Mi a sali for di cas pa 6 of 7'or di



(cont. di pag. 4)

mainta y regresá 7:00 p.m. Y esey a sigi asina pa 15 dia di trabao. Mi ta recomendá pa bai entrevistá cu e companianan menós atractivo promé, pa asina ora bo yega na e companianan mas atractivo, bo a haya hopi práctica caba." Despues di su experiencia cu buscamiento di trabao na Hulanda, Rudy tin un monton di consehonan valioso cu e ta ansioso pa comparti: manda hopi carta, hiba bo último "payslip" cu bo, wak pa bo tin portret di e tamaño uzá pa paspoort hunto cubo, no sea mucho exigente na cuminzamento y ..... por fabor sea na tempo pa entrevistanan ..... Sigur no ta parce cu Rudy lo tin dificultad pa haya un otro trabao .....



Asina cu **Carlos de Cuba** termina cu Lago, e lo bira un instructor di cursonan di gerencia y un miembro di facultad di Psychologisch Adviesbureau na Aruba y Corsow. Un di su responsabilidnan den e posicion nobo aki lo ta di haci bishita na comercio, industria y oficinanan di gobierno pa analisa nan necesidadnan di entrenamiento y despues determina con su organizacion por asisti nan den esey. "Mi ta sinti cu inicialmente," Carlos a comenta, "comercio lo ta un poco cauteloso pa inverti, pero cu eventualmente nan lo wak e necesidad pa ocupa nan mes cu entrenamiento, especialmente e tipo di entrenamiento cu ta aumenta productividad." Carlos tin confianza den Aruba su habilidad pa yega atrobe na un estabilidad económico den futuro. "Y pa motibo di mi background na Lago," ela bisa, "mi tin e conviccion cu mi tin e habilidad pa contribui basta den e desaroyo di Aruba den mi empleo nobo." En berdad elo por! Den su mas cu 33 añanan cu Lago, Carlos tabata ocupa su mes cu instruccion, varios otro aspectonan di entrenamiento, comunicacion y relaciones publicas. Un abundancia di experiencia pa inverti den futuro di Aruba.

# Aruba Investment Foundation: an alternative

All Lago employees terminated within the year 1985 and those terminated on December 31, 1984 and who were searching for ways to invest their benefit payments, were invited to participate in the Aruba Investment Foundation. The purpose of this foundation is to establish, maintain and control an investment program in U.S. dollars with optimum return at

minimum risk of capital. The Centrale Bank van de Nederlandse Antillen has permitted and encouraged the establishment of such a foundation to protect the local market from a sudden large inflow of cash. The employees, were given a one-time



Aruba Investment Foundation Board Members, standing left to right: Walter Arends, John Every and John Hodgson. Sitting from left to right: Julio Curiel and Albino Yarzagaray.

opportunity to participate in this alternative investment program. The Investment Foundation is governed by a board

consisting of five former Lago employees and a representative of the Centrale Bank in an advisory position.



# PRESIDENTE DI IOWUA:

**"We try to stimulate our people ..."**

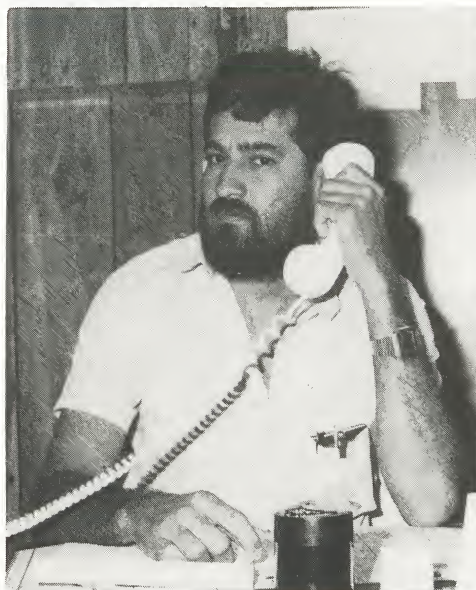
His membership on the Union Board certainly did not fall short of excitement. He became Vice President during the strike in 1982/1983 and President after the announcement of Lago's shutdown. Romulo Geerman, however, does not lack positivism and stimulus.

"Lago's shutdown announcement was definitely a shock, but as a responsible Union, we try to stimulate our people to try to accomplish positive things in the future," said Romulo. "We will remain respectable employees of Lago until March 31. After that, everybody has to give a hand to improve the national situation."

Most recently, the IOWUA Board has worked on two specific issues: the continuation of the Annuitant Medical Plan and the future status of the IOWUA Recreation Center. Said Romulo: "We feel responsible toward our present and past members, to do our utmost for the continuation of the Annuitant Medical Plan. We do see the necessity to continue with the plan for the annuitants and are even studying the possibilities of covering the younger employees with a one-year medical plan." This issue, however, is still being studied by the Union Board and the Annuitant Medical Plan Foundation. The results of the studies will be known at a later date.

Another feasibility study the IOWUA is waiting on is the conversion of the recreation center into some sort of a tourist center with bowling alleys, a coffee shop and bungalows. "We want to do something constructive with it," said Romulo. Before a decision is taken, however, the Union will consult its members for their suggestions and final approval. "We do not want to wait for things to happen, but are moving to create confidence in the future."

What about his future? "My career ends young with Lago," said Romulo. "Life will be more difficult, but we can create lots of possibilities. I will be available to assist with any plans and projects for the future."



Su miembrecia den e Directiva di e Sindicato siguramente no a falta excitacion. El a bira vice presidente durante e welga na 1982/1983 y presidente despues di e anuncio di e ceramento di Lago. Rómulo Geerman, sinembargo, no a falta positivismo y estímulo.

"E anuncio di ceramento di Lago definitivamente tabata un shock, pero como un sindicato responsable, nos ta purba stimula nos hendenan pa purba na realiza cosnan positivo den futuro," Rómulo a bisa. "Nos lo keda empleadonan respetable di Lago te dia 31 di Maart. Despues di esey, tur hende mester duna un man pa mehora e situacion nacional." Mas recien, e Directiva di IOWUA a traha ariba dos tema specifico: e continuacion di e Plan Médico pa Pensionistanan y e futuro posicion di IOWUA Recreation Center.

**"Nos ta purba stimulá nos hendenan ..."**

Rómulo a bisa: "Nos ta sinti un responsabilidad pa cu nos miembronan di awor y di antes, pa haci lo máximo pa e continuacion di e Plan Médico pa Pensionistanan. Nos ta mira e necesidad pa continua cu e plan pa pensionistanan y hasta nos ta studiando e posibilidadnan di cubri e empleadonan mas hoben cu un plan médico di un año." E tema aki, sinembargo, ainda ta wordo studí pa e Directiva di Sindicato y e Fundacion di Plan Médico pa Pensionistanan. E resultadonan di e estudionan lo ta conocí na un fecha posterior.

Un otro estudio di factibilidad ariba cual IOWUA ta wardando ta e transformacion di e centro di recreacion den un clase di centro turístico cu canchanan di bowling, un cafeteria y bungalownan. "Nos kier haci algo constructivo cuné," Rómulo a bisa. Promé cu un decision wordo tumá, sinembargo, e sindicato lo consulta su miembronan pa nan sugerencianan y aprobacion final. "Nos no kier warda pa cosnan cumenza pasa, pero nos ta moviendo pa crea confianza den e futuro." Con ta pará cu su futuro? "Mi carera ta terminá na un edad hoben cu Lago," Rómulo a bisa. "Bida lo ta mas difícil, pero nos por crea hopi posibilidadnan. Lo mi ta disponible pa asisti cu cualquier plan of proyecto pa futuro."



The first representative body for locally hired employees, the Employee Advisory Committee, was formed in 1936. It was replaced by the Lago Employee Council in 1949 which in 1961 became the Independent Oil Workers Union of Aruba (IOWUA). The first collective working agreement between Lago and the IOWUA was signed on December 1961. The last one, on February 1, 1983. On photo above, IOWUA's present board members. Standing from left to right: Basilio Wester, Dennis Jacobs, Humphrey Giel, Felix Garrido and Albert Helder. Sitting from left to right: Walter Arends, Theodoor Wever, Salomon Fingal and Romulo Geerman.



# A REVIEW OF THE PAST;

## Editor's Note:

The relationship between Lago and the Aruban community has always been a close one. Therefore, on the occasion of the last issue of the Aruba Esso News, it seemed only appropriate to include an article written by a community member who in his past positions has had frequent contacts with the Company. Mr. Oscar Henriquez, a well-known public figure in Aruba, fits that description. Mr. Henriquez, who at present is the Managing Director of Maduro & Sons, has in the past served as Deputy and Minister of Finance and for 10 years as Lt. Governor. The Aruba Esso News is thankful for his contribution to this issue.

During my years in government I was in contact with Lago quite often. When setting up the automated administration system for the local government in 1954 for example, it was Zep Oduber and his staff of Lago's Tabulating & Statistical Division who assisted me in doing so. Later on as Deputy of Finance I had dealings with Lago's president J.J. Corrigan and their financial manager C. Brown. And since then I got to know many other Lago officials who have played an important role in the history of Aruba. These experiences have left me with a strong impression; I remember them all as responsible people who were businesslike in their dealings, but at the same time had a very positive and caring attitude towards Aruba and its people. Thanks to their efforts to cooperate, those who were in government at the time, were able to accomplish much for our community. A typical example is the power- and waterplant which was built at Balashi in 1957. The objective of the island government was not only to provide every home on the island with water (many in the country-side were still being supplied by water-trucks) but even more important, we wanted to reduce the high water-tariff. The only way to accomplish this was to build larger evaporating units, which operate more economically. This, however, would only make sense if we could sell the larger volume of water to be produced. Also, combining the water production with the generation of electricity was a way to produce water at a lower cost. Again the question was to whom do we sell this extra power becoming available. Lago was a logical solution, but they were already producing their own water and electricity and were naturally very reluctant to give up their convenient self-supporting position in favour of an arrangement where they would have to depend on a government-owned and -operated utility-plant.

After lengthy discussions they did cooperate by agreeing to buy large quantities of water and power from WEB. This enabled the government to justify investment in larger units, which provided the total population of Aruba, and the new hotels, with adequate quantities of water and electricity at reduced prices. This example is one of the many experiences I had during my years as a Deputy, but also afterwards as Minister of Finance and finally during my ten years as Lt. Governor. At all times, Lago could be depended upon when we needed their assistance in the interest of Aruba.

That is the reason why I have accepted the invitation from the editor of the Esso News to contribute with an article for their last issue. It gives me the opportunity to express my feelings and thoughts at this sad milestone in our history. It goes without saying that Lago's existence in Aruba during 60 years has contributed significantly towards the economic well-being on the island. It is unfortunate of course that the era of a booming economy has come to an end. It serves no purpose, however, to keep lamenting this unexpected and tragic happening.

We would do better remembering the lives we were able to live, the work we were able to perform, the business we were able to do, and last but not least the education we received either in school or through experience, enabling us to face the future today in a stronger position than most other islands in the Caribbean.

There is a future for those who are willing to work at it. Aruba with its 60.000 inhabitants can survive. There is a sound economic basis of infrastructure facilities and a fine climate combined with magnificent beaches. A program to increase Aruba's scenic attractiveness, and to expand its tourist facilities would lead to a highly successful tourist island. If developed in an organized and coordinated way, tourism can become an economic

## A GLANCE INTO THE FUTURE

resource that offers more jobs than a modern oil-refinery. Much is yet to be done. But what a challenge! The mess, wrecks and waste, which are still visible along our public roads need to be removed; also commercial bill-boards (signs) which pollute our landscape, the planting of more trees (palms and others) is necessary, and a first class 18-hole golf-course with modern facilities, better roads, more hotel-rooms, and last but not least a promotion campaign directed at the right markets. It is my personal opinion that we should move away from junkets and other low-priced vacations, and aim at a higher-income section of the market, like the tourists attracted by St. Martin. Said market is large enough to satisfy Aruba (and other islands), and its people who can afford higher rates will improve the profitability of our hotels, which are faced with rather high operating costs. There are of course other possibilities too. Potentially Aruba may be able to develop certain industries which use raw-material from for example Colombia and/or Venezuela, exporting the products to the U.S.A. taking advantages of the facilities offered by the CBI (Caribbean Basin Initiative), a special program being introduced by the U.S.-Government. In addition export-possibilities exist to the European Common Market of which the Netherlands Antilles are an associate-member.

I also believe that fishery is a real possibility, if set-up in a modern and commercial way. Potentially there are many possibilities. Considering how motivated the people of Aruba are, I am confident that eventually we shall overcome the difficult years ahead and succeed in creating a healthy and strong economy again. We already have a good foundation. All we need to do now is, to start building on it.





